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Gaines Twp. trustees adopt budget for upcoming year

James Gemmell
Contributing Writer

The Gaines Charter Township Board of Trustees recently adopted a nearly $8 million general fund budget for fiscal year 2026 that begins Jan. 1.

The total is up from the more than $6.2 million budget for 2025.

"There's a bit of a jump over the 2025 budget," Township Manager Rod Weersing said. "But some of that is planning ahead.

"So, putting $500,000 into the Fire Apparatus Equipment Replacement Fund. Planning for future equipment replacement and increasing the road funding from $250,000 a year to $500,000 a year."

The road funds will be matched by the Kent County Road Commission.

"So, we'll be doing road resurfacing and repair of a million dollars' worth of roads in 2026," Weersing added.

The 2026 budget includes a fund balance transfer of more than $2.3 million from unspent revenues from prior fiscal years.

A staff memo indicates that $778,958 will be transferred from the township's savings account to the public safety fund to help offset expenses there. Also, the plan calls for a transfer from the fund balance to the Fire Department Apparatus Capital Fund of $500,000 that staff said will help fund future purchases.

A public hearing and second reading of the draft budget was held at the Oct. 13 township board meeting.

Gaines Township is no longer receiving revenue from Byron Township, after previously having split costs of running

See **BUDGET** on 7

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Father Michael Cilibraise of Holy Family Catholic Church in Caledonia presided over the dedication and blessing of the new "Baby Memorial Garden" in memory of Mike Kilmartin at St. Mary's Cemetery on Oct. 24. **Photos by Sharon Albaugh**

Caledonia church dedicates new 'Baby Memorial Garden'

Karen Turko-Ebright
Staff Writer

Recently, John Mancuso, the director of buildings and grounds for the Holy Family Catholic Church in Caledonia, has been on a mission.

As the parish's sexton, Mancuso oversees three cemeteries, including the St. Patrick, St. Joseph and St. Mary's sites.

And for the past year, Mancuso has been working to finish the "Baby Memorial Garden" at the St. Mary's Cemetery in Cascade Township as a tribute to Mike Kilmartin, who passed away a little over a year ago.

The Baby Memorial Garden is a reminder to all to never forget all the children unable to survive infectious diseases in the 1870s and to honor Kilmartin.

"This memorial was a lifelong dream of Mike Kilmartin's, and since his passing this past year, I've made it a priority to see it completed — both in memory of all the lost babies and to honor Mike's vision," Mancuso said. "His dream was that the babies laid to rest in this cemetery, some over a hundred years ago, would finally be recognized and remembered."

A plaque displayed on the fence surrounding the Baby Memorial Garden explains the history of St. Mary's Cemetery in Cascade Township and why young children are buried in a portion of the cemetery.

History of the St. Mary's Cemetery, which is outlined on a plaque at Baby Garden Memorial, reportedly started with Edward Lennon, when his family and relatives came from Ireland to Cascade Township.

Lennon reportedly purchased 80 acres from the government land office in Ionia. The names of many of his relatives are easily recognizable – William Annis, Michael Eardley, John Brougham and Thomas Harmon. Many of their siblings and relatives chose to follow these men to the southwestern part of the township.

The Irish migrants spoke with a lilting accent, kept to themselves and were Roman Catholic. The Lennon family hosted Mass in their home in the 1840s.

In 1857, a log church was built on land donated by Lennon. The log church was replaced in 1881 with a new structure, complete with steeples at the corner of 52nd Street and Kraft Avenue.

See **DEDICATES** on 6

Gaines chamber to host luminary walk, holiday luncheon

James Gemmell
Contributing Writer

December promises to be a busy month for the Gaines Chamber of Commerce.

Among other events, the local chamber will host its second annual Holiday Luminary Walk from 5:30 to 8 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 6, at Prairie Wolf Park, located adjacent to the township hall.

The inaugural luminary walk proved to be popular, as dozens of families strolled a 1.5-mile path through the scenic woods. The 450 LED candles that were placed in paper bags shone a light along the route. The bags were weighed down with sand to keep them in place from the parking lot at the park entrance around to the apple orchard.

Barb Nauta, GCC executive director, said the luminary walk is a free event designed to spread holiday cheer among the community's families.

"As dusk settles, the park will transform into an illuminated wonderland," Nauta said. "It will provide a beautiful backdrop for a leisurely stroll. Attendees can look forward to complimentary hot cocoa, delicious candy canes and festive cookies to enjoy as they explore."



Santa Claus will make a return appearance to this year's Holiday Luminary Walk set for 5:30-8 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 6, at Prairie Wolf Park, located adjacent to the Gaines Township Hall.



Participants in the inaugural Holiday Luminary Walk, including Gaines Chamber of Commerce executive director Barb Nauta (third from left), warm up with some hot chocolate along the lighted trail in Prairie Wolf Park. **Photos by James Gemmell**

Not to be outdone, Santa Claus will be on hand for photo opportunities.

"Additionally, we are delighted to have the South Christian High School Choir performing, adding a wonderful musical ambiance to the event," Nauta added.

The GCC's poster announcing the luminary walk states, "Bring your family and friends to experience a stroll through a beautifully lighted path, lined with glowing luminaries to celebrate the season."

The chamber also will co-host a holiday luncheon for registered guests from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 9, at the Postma Center on the Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services campus in Cutlerville.

"We will have a representative from Pine Rest speaking about how donations help the Pine Rest families," Nauta said.

Gaines Township Supervisor Bob Terpstra and GCC representatives will provide remarks at the luncheon.

One of the other highlights will be the Pine Rest Giving Tree Silent Auction. Donated gift cards and cash will be collected at the Postma Center to purchase Christmas gifts for Pine Rest residents and patients. Donations also can be made online at pinerest.org/giving-tree.

See **LUMINARY** on 5

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Christmas on the Corridor returns Nov. 29

The Gun Lake Business Association (GLBA) announced recently that the third annual Christmas on the Corridor event is scheduled to return on Saturday, Nov. 29, at Chief Noonday Car Park in Yankee Springs.

Families, neighbors and visitors are welcomed to experience a festive evening filled with lights, local shopping, seasonal activities and the warm spirit that makes the Gun Lake community shine, say organizers. Festive events include a Christmas market featuring local vendors and holiday gifts, running from 3 to 7 p.m.; family activities from 4 to 6 p.m.; live reindeer from Reindeer Ranch, holiday tunes spun by Moonlight; hot cocoa and coffee; kids' crafts; photos with Mr. and Mrs. Claus and a live nativity scene and carolers provided by Orangeville Baptist Church.

Organizers invite locals to gather around the Community Christmas Tree at 6 p.m. for its annual lighting ceremony.

"Christmas on the Corridor is a celebration of the incredible small-business community that keeps Gun Lake thriving," said Deb Timmerman, GLBA tourism chair. "When families shop local, dine local and gather here, it strengthens the entire area. This event brings us together in the most joyful way."

A community tradition, Christmas on the Corridor began as a way to highlight the growing network of businesses along the Yankee Springs corridor and has quickly become one of the area's most anticipated holiday events, Timmerman said.

The GLBA, in partnership with Chief Noonday Car Park and community business sponsors, continues to expand the experience each year with new activities, partnerships and interactive community features.

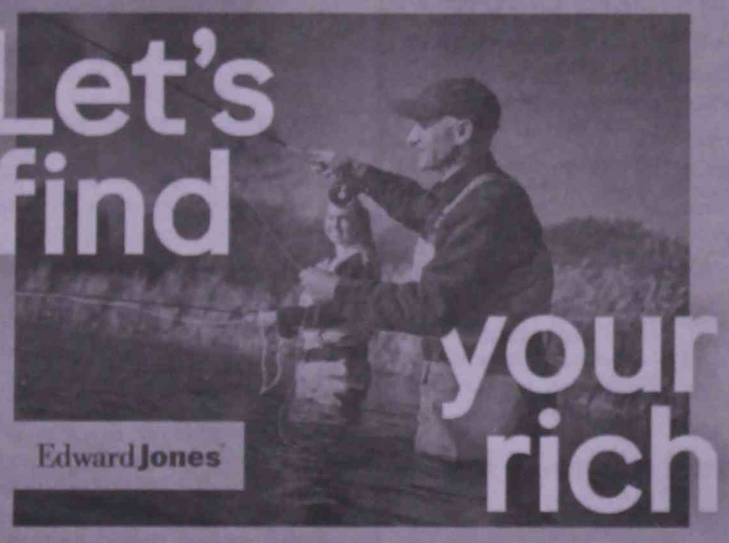
For more information on Christmas on the Corridor, follow the Gun Lake Business Association on Facebook.

Chief Noonday Car Park is located at 11899 M-179 Hwy. — *KTE*



Santa showed up at Christmas on the Corridor in 2023 and will return again this year. **File photo**

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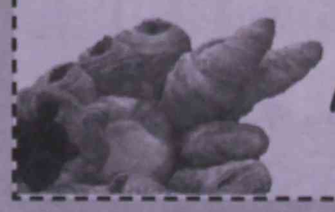
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Obituaries

John Dennis Riley

John Dennis Riley, age 60, of Middleville, passed away on November 2, 2025. He was born on November 3, 1964, in Trumann, Arkansas, the son of Delbert E. and Gladys Dean (Bettis) Riley.

John was a tool and die maker and an automotive engineer by trade—someone who could tell you anything about a vehicle and took pride in understanding how things worked. Intelligent, hardworking, and generous with his knowledge, John was the one people turned to when they had a question or needed a hand.

He was a big family man, known for his beautiful smile and his way of making others feel loved and at ease. He was hard not to like. When John loved you, he loved you with his whole heart. He enjoyed holding babies, spending time with his family, and traveling. A lifelong sports fan, he especially loved golf and football.



John had a great sense of humor—funny, enthusiastic, and full of life. Though he wasn't musical himself, he loved music! What he lacked in talent he made up for with enthusiasm, personality and heart. Although he was a picky eater, he loved to cook and everyone loved what he made. His food reflected the same warmth and confidence he exuded.

A spiritual man, John also cherished family traditions, especially the annual Thanksgiving trip he helped begin—one that will continue in his memory.

John is survived by his wife of 21 years, Pamela (Jacobs) Riley; sons Michael (Jamie) Riley and Kenneth Riley; grandchildren Nolan, Luke, Jacob, and Lane; sisters Elizabeth (Garry) Stone of Romulus and Debra (Dennis) Seeman of Brighton; stepmother Patricia Riley of Casa Grande, Arizona; and stepbrother Scott Moellenberndt of Scottsdale, Arizona; sister-in-law, Darlene Riley.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Delbert and Gladys Riley, son Steven Riley, and brother Delbert Riley Jr.

Please visit www.beelergoresfuneral.com to share a memory or leave a condolence message for John's family.

LOCAL CHURCH DIRECTORY

ALASKA BAPTIST CHURCH
Service Times
Sunday at 9:30 AM & 6:00 PM
www.alaskabaptist.org
7240 68th Street SE, Caledonia

Caledonia Vine Street Church
Join us for our traditional yet casual worship service, in person or online, at 9:00 am
Rev. Robert Mayo, Interim Pastor
250 Vine Street 616-891-8669

cornerstonechurch
Join us in person or online
Sundays 9:30 & 11am
1675 84th St. SE
Caledonia, MI 49316
cornerstonemi.org/weekend

FIRST BAPTIST Middleville
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Livestream: facebook.com/firstbaptistmiddleville
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Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
908 W. Main Street, Middleville
(Missouri Synod)
Sunday Worship..... 9:30 a.m.
Pastor: Rob Wurst
http://goodshepherdlcms.googlepages.com
Church: (269) 795-2391

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH
9669 Kraft Ave., Caledonia
Phone: 616-891-9259
www.holyfamilycaledonia.org
Saturday Evening Mass ..... 5:00 p.m.
Sunday Masses..... 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
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Middleville Location -
1664 M-37
9:30 am and 11:00 am

PEACE CHURCH
PEACECHURCH.CC
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Lead Pastor: Pastor Ryan Kimmel
616.891.8119
6950 Cherry Valley Rd., Middleville, MI 49333
peacechurch.cc

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Fellowship
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Sunday School
10 to 10:45 a.m.
@ St. Paul Lutheran Church & Preschool
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Office 616-891-8688 • Preschool (616) 891-8688
www.stpaulcaledonia.org

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Middleville, MI 49333
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Community Group ..... 11:00 a.m.
James L. Collison, Pastor
www.yankeespringsbiblechurch.org



Helen Mae Gorton

Helen Mae Gorton, age 94, of Middleville, was called to her heavenly home on Thursday, November 13, 2025. Helen was a loving and devoted mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. She enjoyed spending time with her family. Her husband, Keith, and daughter, Nancy Koning; preceded her in death. She will be deeply missed by her daughters, Jill (Stephen) Zoet, Kristi (Thad) Temple, Paula (Todd) Van Duine; son-in-law, Robert Koning; grandchildren, Lucas (Lana) Zoet, Rachel (Druvis) Gerrits, Mary-Caitlin (Ron) Breckon, Ethan (Marlee) Zoet, Emily Temple, Seth Temple, Justin (Kristi) Koning, Katie (Scott) Nelson, Anna (Kirk) VanderVennen, Tess (Jason) Sears, Gillian (Quinn) Grassmid, Olivia (Austin) Gibson, Micah (Grace) VanDuine, Selah VanDuine, Judah VanDuine; and 25 great grandchildren. Private interment services at Robbins Cemetery will be held at a later date. Contributions in memory of Helen may be made to Thornapple Valley Church of Middleville.

GO ONLINE TO SUNANDNEWS.COM

Obituaries

Sharon Ann Kaechele



Sharon Ann Kaechele, aged 85, of Caledonia, MI, passed away peacefully on November 14, 2025 in Byron Center, MI. Born on March 31, 1940, in Grand Rapids, MI, Sharon was the daughter of George and Helen (Culp) Martin.

Sharon grew up in the Green Lake area and graduated from Thornapple-Kellogg High School in 1958 where she met the love of her life David J. Kaechele. They married on May 22, 1964 and spent the next 60 wonderful years together until his passing in November 2024. Sharon started working as a bank teller in Middleville followed by working at Steelcase in cost accounting, which led to her husband getting his job there as well. However, her main job was a home maker/worker providing office work for the farm, endless homemade meals and a much-loved filled home for her family.

A devout Christian, Sharon attended Leighton Church, where she taught Sunday School, sharing her faith and compassion with the next generation. Sharon also attended Kentwood Community Church, where she volunteered countless hours at the church library. Her commitment to her church and community was an inspiration to all who knew her.

Sharon's creative talents shone through her exquisite quilting and sewing. Her hands were rarely still, as she crafted beautiful pieces that became treasured family heirlooms. An excellent baker, Sharon's kitchen was a hub of warmth and delicious aromas, especially during family gatherings. A voracious reader, she supported her husband's mission work by providing reading materials, demonstrating her belief in the power of education and faith.

Family was the cornerstone of Sharon's life. She is survived by her loving sons, Brian (Joanne) Kaechele and Mark (Ronda) Kaechele; her adored grandchildren, Alex, Nicholas (Reagan), Daniel, Elizabeth, and Luke; her brother, Bruce (Marcia) Martin; her nephew, Kevin Martin; her brother-in-law, Richard (Pam) Kaechele; and her sisters-in-law, Vivian (Jack) Bruin, Mary Kaechele, and Margaret Smith and many more nieces and nephews. Sharon was preceded in death by her parents, George and Helen (Culp) Martin, and brother-in-law John Smith.

Bird watching with her husband was one of Sharon's simple pleasures, along with the company of her beloved cats. Her life was a tapestry of service, creativity, and unwavering love for her family and church community.

Sharon's family will receive friends on Saturday, November 29, 2025 from 9:30-10:30 AM at the Beeler-Gores Funeral Home, Middleville, where her funeral service will be conducted at 10:30 AM. Burial will take place immediately following the service at Hooker Cemetery with a 1:00 PM fellowship lunch served to friends and family at Leighton Church, 2nd Street, Caledonia, MI 49316. Memorial contributions to the American Cancer Society or World Gospel Missions will be appreciated. Please visit www.beelergoresfuneral.com to share a memory or leave a condolence message for Sharon's family.

LUMINARY

Continued from Page 2

Persons may register to sponsor a silent auction basket. Attendees will bid on the baskets and other items at the holiday luncheon. All proceeds will go to the Pine Rest Giving Tree community families.

Donations are being accepted online, as well, at pinerest.org/foundation/giving-tree.

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DEDICATES

Continued from Page 1

Parish records described it as "... a thing of service and beauty … a monument proclaiming far and near the devotion of the Catholic people of Cascade to God and the Holy Mother."

In the 1970s, the church was torn down due to air traffic needs at the Kent County Airport. The babies and children that were buried in this portion of the cemetery were victims of lung fever (pneumonia), scarlet fever and diphtheria in the 1870s. They ranged in age from 4 to 12 years.

The memorial garden was dedicated out of respect for the young ones.

Kilmartin was a member of the Holy Family Parish for many years. He was also a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Members of the local parish gathered on Oct. 24 to dedicate the Baby Memorial Garden. According to organizers, donations for the memorial came from the parishioners of Holy Family, Knights of Columbus and Holy Family Council of Catholic Women.

Kilmartin served with Roger Campbell in the Knights of Columbus, and together were ushers at the Holy Family church. The two knew each other for 20 years before Kilmartin passed away in October 2024.



A statue of a baby angel with wings is placed at the Baby Memorial Garden at St. Mary's Cemetery in Cascade Township. The Baby Memorial Garden is a reminder to all to never forget all the children unable to survive infectious diseases in the 1870s and to honor Kilmartin. **Photo by John Mancuso**

HISTORY OF ST. MARY'S CEMETERY

Edward Lennon, his family and relatives came from Ireland to Cascade Township. He purchased 80 acres from the government land office in Ionia. The names of many of his relatives are easily recognizable; William Annis, Michael Eardley, John Brougham, and Thomas Harmon. Many of their siblings and relatives chose to follow these men to southwestern Cascade. The Irish spoke with a lilting accent, kept to themselves and were Roman Catholic. The Lennon family hosted Mass in their home in the 1840's. In 1857 a log church was built on land donated by Edward Lennon. By 1881 the church was named St. Mary's and was the spiritual home for 47 families. In 1888 the log church was replaced with a new structure, complete with steeples at the corner of 52nd St. and Kraft Ave. Parish records described it as "...a thing of service and beauty...a monument proclaiming far and near the devotion of the Catholic people of Cascade to God and the Holy Mother." In the 1970's the church was torn down due to air traffic needs at the Kent County Airport. The parish merged with others to form Holy Family in Caledonia. The cemetery surrounds the former site of St. Mary's church so, it too, is on property donated by Edward Lennon. Dramatic change came in the 1960's when Irish and Polish farms were purchased to make way for the new Kent County Airport. The babies and children that are buried in this portion of the cemetery were victims of Lung Fever, Scarlett Fever and Diphtheria in the 1870's. They ranged in age from four to twelve years. It is out of respect for these young ones that we dedicate this memorial to them.

The Baby Memorial Garden at St. Mary's is a reminder to all to never forget all the children unable to survive infectious diseases in the 1870s. A plaque explains the history of St. Mary's Cemetery.

"The project started before Mike Kilmartin died, he wanted to honor the babies buried in unmarked graves," Campbell said. "After his funeral, we decided on a layout and started getting materials.

"This spring the concrete was poured, and we began putting in the posts and rails. The project took several work sessions," he added. "The Knights provided all the labor and most of the material. The Catholic Council of Women from the parish paid for the statues."

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF CALEDONIA
COUNTY OF KENT, MICHIGAN

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission of the Charter Township of Caledonia will hold a public hearing on December 15, 2025 at 7:00 p.m., at the Caledonia Township Hall, 8196 Broadmoor SE, Caledonia, MI 49316. The public hearing is to receive comments regarding the application of Michael Brann for a Special Land Use to a drive through window in a strip commercial building at 6675 Broadmoor, Parcel: 41-23-06-451-038.

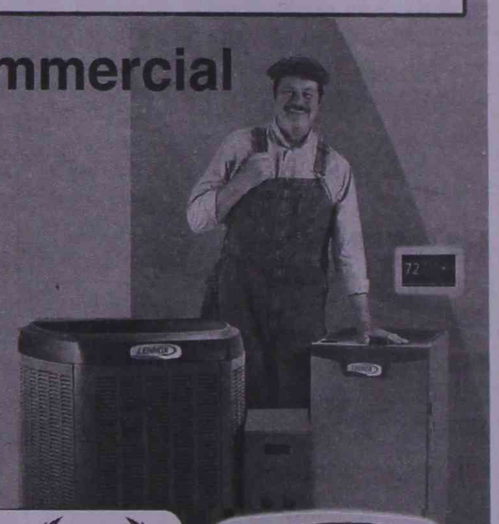
All interested persons may attend the public hearing and comment on the proposed request. Written comments concerning the request may be submitted to the Township office, at the above-stated address, up to the time of the public hearing.

Dated: November 17, 2025

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Category	Projected Revenue	Percent
SAD Revenue	$2,230,457	42.77%
Transfer from General Fund	$2,903,958	55.68%
State Revenue Sharing	$80,885	1.55%
Total	$5,215,300	

About 43% of Gaines Township's revenue for public safety will come from the annual special assessment levy, which the township board voted in September to increase to 1.5 mills. **Sources: gainestownship.org**

Fund	Recommended Appropriation
General	$7,966,792
Public Safety	$5,215,300
Building	$939,950
Sewer	$4,232,195
Water	$4,078,195
Total	**$22,431,982***

A chart shows how much money is being appropriated in the Gaines Township budget for the fiscal year that begins Jan. 1, 2026. The total amount includes about $3.4 million in interfund transfers.

BUDGET

Continued from Page 1

a fire station in Cutlerville. Byron Township ended its 73-year-old partnership with Gaines Township and launched its own fire station on Clay Avenue in September 2025.

Now, Gaines Township is paying the full cost of running its fire stations in Cutlerville and Dutton. Staff have said the township also is making 20% annual payments to Byron Township to buy out that township's $940,000 equity share in the fire barn on 68th Street over five years.

In addition, Weersing said that Gaines Township can no longer rely on American Rescue Plan Act funds to offset expenses.

The State & Local Fiscal Recovery Fund program provided funding to local governments during the COVID-19 pandemic. The spending deadline is Dec. 31, 2026. But municipalities had to declare by December 2024 how they intended to use their ARPA funds.

The township's federal allocation was nearly $2.9 million, with local officials reporting all of it had been obligated.

"The loss of this revenue has led to a bigger transfer being proposed from the general fund budget," Weersing said.

The township budget for public safety projects a total of more than $5.2 million in revenue in fiscal year 2026. The budget anticipates revenue from the annual township-wide special assessment levy for public safety will be more than $2.2 million. There also is a more than $2.9 million transfer from the general fund and $80,885 in state revenue sharing.

The budget appropriates just under $940,000 for the building department, $4.2 million for sewer and nearly $4.1 million for water. Including the general fund and public safety, the total appropriations for 2026 will be almost $22.4 million and will include $4.4 million in interfund transfers.

In other business:

The township trustees voted 7-0 to set a public hearing at their Dec. 8 meeting on a zoning text amendment concerning Electronic Changeable Messaging signs in the Suburban Residential zoning district.

Prior to a recent amendment to the township's zoning ordinance, institutions such as churches and private schools could install ECMs by obtaining a special use permit from the planning commission.

Township staff said the amendment was made because a steering committee deemed them to be a visual nuisance because of obtrusive lighting that impacts drivers and neighbors. But now, the planning commission is recommending that the signs again be allowed in the SR zoning districts.



Members of the Gaines Township Board of Trustees review the fiscal year 2026 budget at their Nov. 10 meeting at the township hall. **Photo by James Gemmell**

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SPECIAL SECTION



Holiday Gift Guide





Did you know?

Every year certain gifts emerge as the "hot" toys and games for children. These are the presents kids are eager to find wrapped up and ready for them. Adults often scramble to secure these popular items. According to the United Kingdom-based retailer Argos, the following are among the most popular items children were asking Santa Claus to deliver over the previous decade.

2024: BeyBlade Xtreme Battle Set

2023: Nerf Elite Double Punch

2022: LEGO Icons Optimus Prime "Transformers" Robot Model Set

2021: Bluey Family Home Playset

2020: Hatchimals Pixies Crystal Flyers

2019: Furreal Cubby Bear

2018: Fingerlings Untamed T-Rex and Dino Cage

2017: Cozmo, White Robot

2016: Hatchimals, Purple Egg

2015: Barbie Saddle 'N Ride

CALEDONIA LIBRARY
HOLIDAY BOOK SALE!

Public Sale
TH Dec. 4 5-7pm
F Dec. 5 10am-4pm
SAT Dec. 6 10am-2pm

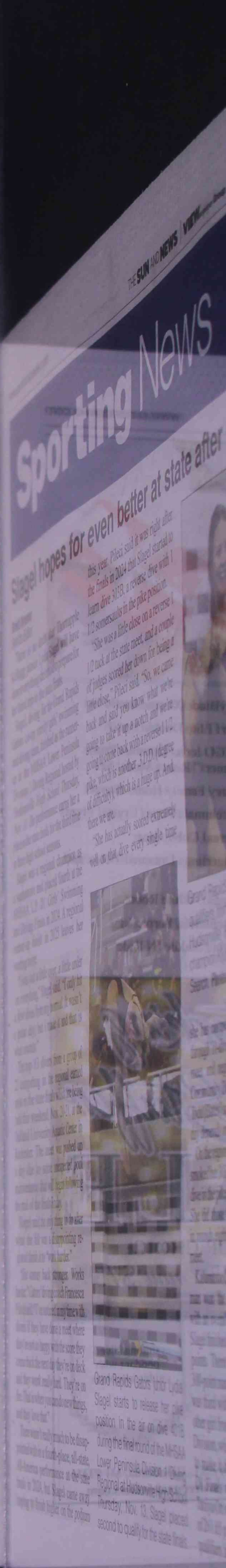
Friends of the Library only Pre-Sale
Thursday, Dec. 4 3-5pm
Membership can be purchased at the door

20 FREE books to teachers/educators with ID

Courtesy of the Caledonia Friends of the Library!
KDL Caledonia Branch
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Sporting News

Slagel hopes for even better at state after regional runner-up finish

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

There is no doubt that Thornapple Kellogg junior Lydia Slagel will have done everything she could to prepare for her third trip to the state finals.

Slagel, diving for the Grand Rapids Gators co-op varsity girls' swimming and diving team, finished as the runner-up at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Diving Regional hosted by Hudsonville High School Thursday, Nov. 13. The performance earns her a place in the state finals for the third time in three high school seasons.

Slagel was a regional champion as a sophomore and placed fourth at the MHSAA L.P. D1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals in 2024. A regional runner-up finish in 2025 leaves her wanting more.

"I was just a little over, a little under on everything," Slagel said. "I only hit a few dives from my normal. It wasn't a great day, but I made it and that is what counts."

The top 13 divers from a group of 22 competing in the regional earned spots in the state finals which are being held this weekend, Nov. 20-21, at the Oakland University Aquatic Center in Rochester. The meet was pushed up a day due to some unexpected pool maintenance that will begin following the end of the finals Friday.

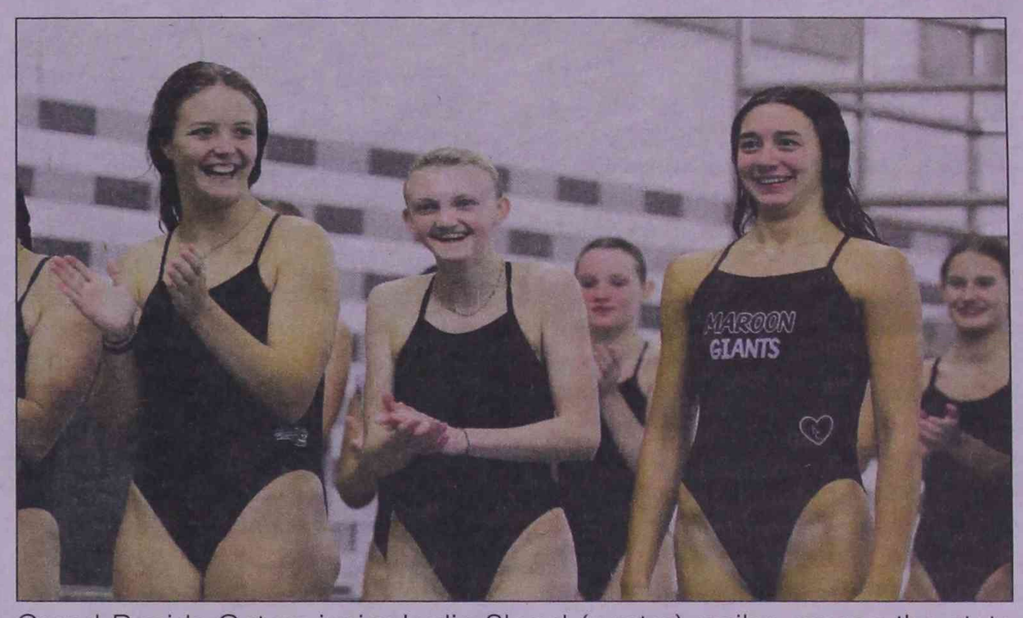
Slagel said the only thing to do after what she felt was a disappointing regional finish is to "work harder."

"She comes back stronger. Works harder," Gators' diving coach Francesca Pileci said. "I've noticed in my time with divers if they have done a meet where they're not so happy with the score they come back the next day they're on deck and they work really hard. They're on fire. That is when you can do new things, and they love that."

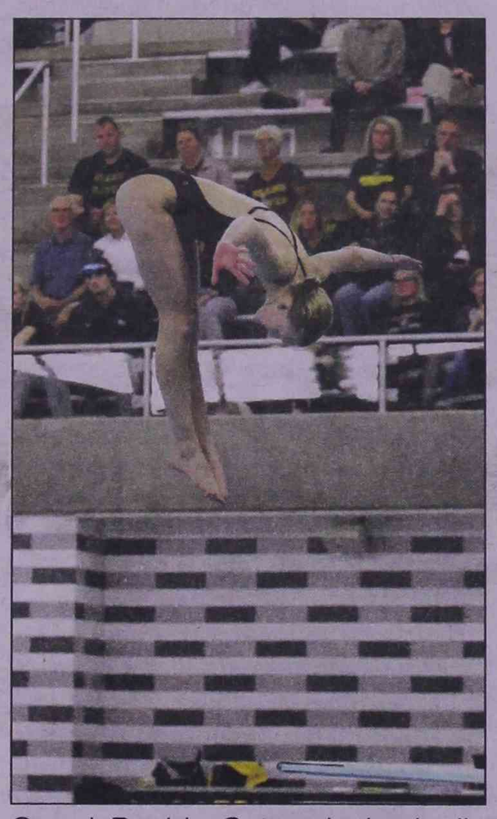
There wasn't really much to be disappointed with in a fourth-place, all-state, All-America performance at the state finals in 2024, but Slagel came away hoping to finish higher on the podium this year. Pileci said it was right after the finals in 2024 that Slagel started to learn dive 303B, a reverse dive with 1 1/2 somersaults in the pike position.

"She was a little close on a reverse 1 1/2 tuck at the state meet, and a couple of judges scored her down for being a little close," Pileci said. "So, we came back and said you know what we're going to take it up a notch and we're going to come back with a reverse 1 1/2 pike, which is another .3 D.D. (degree of difficulty), which is a huge up. And, there we are.

"She has actually scored extremely well on that dive every single time she has competed it, from dual meets through 11-dive meets, the conference meet and regionals. Like [Hastings Community Diving Club head coach] Todd [Bates] says, 'what happens on the day depends on the day with diving.'"



Grand Rapids Gators junior Lydia Slagel (center) smiles among the state qualifiers from the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Diving Regional at Hudsonville High School Thursday, Nov. 13. She is flanked by regional champion Kiya Bowman from Kalamazoo Central (right) and Jenison's Missy Search. **Photos by Brett Bremer**


Grand Rapids Gators junior Lydia Slagel starts to release her pike position in the air on dive 401B during the final round of the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Diving Regional at Hudsonville High School Thursday, Nov. 13. Slagel placed second to qualify for the state finals.

On the regional day, Pileci said Slagel smoked her 303B and nailed her reverse dive in the pike position too, dive 301B. She did those two dives back to back in rounds eight and nine at the 11-dive meet.

Kalamazoo Central senior Kiya Bowman won the regional championship with an overall score of 408.95 points. Slagel finished the evening with 390.80 points. There were six girls over the 300-point mark. Jenison's Missy Search was third with 345.70 points. The only other girl from the OK Conference East Division, which the Gators' compete in, to make it through the regional to the D1 Finals was Grand Rapids Union's Taniya Ott who placed 12th with a score of 261.65 points. The last of the 13 state qualifiers had a score of 261.45.

"She dove amazing," Slagel said of Bowman, who was eighth at the state finals a year ago. "She hit all of her dives and I am so proud of her. I talk to her. We do club stuff together and we always comment on each other's posts. I love her. She's so sweet."

Caledonia had diver Lily Smith qualify for the meet and place 22nd. She had a score of 103.15. It was the top 21 divers that advanced through the prelim's on into the semifinals. The top 17 after the semifinals competed in the finals for the 13 state spots.

There were three L.P. D1 Diving Regionals contested across the state with one at Oxford and one at Highland Milford. Bowman had the highest regional score of any of the D1 divers and Slagel had the third highest score.

"We just have to take our time a little bit more on the board, and what we said today was top 13 is all we needed," Pileci said. "It was just a warm-up for state. So, we'll go back to the board and keep working."

Caledonia hockey co-op skates to a 3-1 start

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Caledonia varsity hockey team, a co-op with Lowell and Thornapple Kellogg, was bested for the first time this season on its new home ice at Patterson Ice Center Saturday.

The Mattawan Wildcats snapped a 2-2 tie with a power play goal with 2:48 to play in the third period and then added an empty-netter for a 4-2 win. The Fighting Scots are now 3-1 overall this season after bouncing back with a 6-3 win over Sparta Tuesday, Nov. 18.

The Fighting Scots opened their season with a 4-2 win over the Portage Muskies at Wings Event Center in Kalamazoo Nov. 7 and then took down Rockford 4-2 in the first OK Conference Rue Division contest of the season Nov. 8 at Patterson Ice Center.

Patterson is the new home ice for the Caledonia team after years sharing the Kentwood Ice Arena with the East Kentwood Falcons.

"The move was facilitated to best fit our ice time needs and facilities for our program," Caledonia High School athletic director Phil Miedema said. "We are grateful to East Kentwood High School for our partnerships in athletics and we look forward to working with their district in the future."

The Fighting Scots also have a new leader this winter in head coach Tyler Jaenicke a former Grand Rapids Christian assistant coach and three-year assistant captain for Davenport University's Men's DII Hockey team.

Mattawan never trailed Saturday. The Wildcats got a goal from Royce Teall off an assist from Benjamin Edington 14 minutes into the contest to lead 1-0. The teams then went back and forth in the second period.

Caledonia evened the game on a power play goal by Bryce Mitchell 4:53 into the second period. Harmon Esch notched an assist firing a shot in from the point that Mitchell finished off. Gabe Supuk also tallied an assist on the goal. Esch added an unassisted goal 15:05 into the period.



Caledonia senior defender Isaiyah Supuk looks to move the puck as Mattawan's Tyler Aubochon closes in during their non-conference contest Saturday, Nov. 15, at Patterson Ice Center in Grand Rapids.

In between, the Wildcats got an unassisted goal from Edington, who also scored the late empty-net goal.

Ty Lewandowski scored twice and four other Fighting Scots found the net as they defeated the Sparta Spartans 6-3 at Griff's Ice House at Belknap Park Tuesday in Grand Rapids.

Harmon Esch, Eston Brown, Drew Nichols and Ethan Sova also scored for Caledonia.

Nichols had three assists too, getting a helper on each of the Fighting Scots' first three goals. He scored himself with 12:40 into the second period to push Caledonia to a 4-1 lead at that point.

Sparta rallied with two goals in the first seven minutes of the third period to get within 4-3. Jameson Meendering and Reid Bennet both scored their first goals of the season for the Spartans within 31 seconds of each other.

Lewandowski finally gave the Scots some breathing room with his second goal of the game at the 13:50 mark of the third period, and then Sova finished off the Spartans with an unassisted, short handed goal with 1:06 remaining.

Gabe Supuk had two assists for the Scots and Evan Moore had one.



Caledonia senior forward Harmon Esch leads the line of celebration along the Fighting Scot bench after a goal against Mattawan in a non-conference contest on the team's new home ice at Patterson Ice Center in Grand Rapids Saturday, Nov. 15.
Photos by Brett Bremer

The Fighting Scots host Forest Hills Central at Patterson Ice Arena today, Nov. 22, and then are off until a weekend at the Alpena Showcase Nov. 28-29 at Northern Lights Arena.

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PUBLIC HEARING

The Village of Middleville Council
will hold a PUBLIC HEARING on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at 7:00 pm,
or as soon thereafter as possible,
in the Council Chambers at the Middleville Village Hall at 100 East Main Street.

The purpose of the PUBLIC HEARING is to consider a proposed Amendment No. 2 ("Amendment No. 2") to the Amended and Restated Tax Increment Financing and Development Plan for the Village of Middleville Downtown Development Authority, as amended (the "Amended Plan"), pursuant to the Recodified Tax Increment Financing Act (Act 57 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 2018, as amended).

The boundaries of the Downtown Development Authority Development Area are described and shown in the Amended Plan, which is available for public inspection during regular business hours at the office of the Village Clerk, 100 East Main Street, Middleville, Michigan.

Amendment No. 2 to the Amended Plan does not propose or require the relocation of families or individuals from the Development Area. The proposed amendment updates project listings, revises financial projections, and extends the plan duration through December 31, 2030.

All aspects of the proposed Amendment No. 2 and any other related information that the Village Council deems appropriate are open for discussion at the public hearing. At the hearing, citizens, taxpayers, and property owners may be heard regarding the proposed amendment. Written comments may be submitted to the Village Clerk's office up to the time of the public hearing.

Authorized by the Village Council of the Village of Middleville on November 12, 2025.

The public is invited to attend this open meeting and to offer comments. Alternatively, to participate in the meeting by providing written comment, you may email your comment to the Village Clerk at rvanpolen@villageofmiddleville.org, or drop them off in person to Middleville Village Hall. Written comments received prior to 4:00 pm on December 16, 2025 will be distributed to Council members and it will be noted that such comments were received prior to the meeting.

Persons with special needs who wish to attend should contact the Village Clerk no less than 3 days prior to the meeting. The Village Clerk can be contacted by phone at the number indicated above or by email at rvanpolen@villageofmiddleville.org, during normal business hours (Monday thru Thursday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and Friday 8:00 am to noon).

Posted 11/13/2025
Rhonda Van Polen, Village Clerk

YMCA Turkey Trot takes off for 17th time Thursday morning



There will be prizes once again for the best fall-themed runner in the YMCA of Barry County Turkey Trot Thursday, Nov. 27. The 17th annual event takes off from Algonquin Lake.



Runners get across the finish line at the end of the 2024 YMCA of Barry County Turkey Trot 5K race. Late registration is going on now for the 2025 even which will be held Thanksgiving morning, Nov. 27, at Algonquin Lake. The event also includes a free 1 Mile Fun Run. **Courtesy photos**

The YMCA of Barry County will host its 17th annual Thanksgiving Turkey Trot 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run Thursday, Nov. 27, at Algonquin Lake.

The top male and female runners win turkeys from Otto's Turkey Farm in Middleville as the YMCA invites runners to wobble before they gobble.

Race registration can be done online at runsignup.com. Late registration is going on now. The cost is $40 for adults 18-and-up and $30 for youth 17-and-under. Those partaking in late registration are not guaranteed a race T-shirt. Online registration will end Nov. 25 at 11:59 p.m. Participation in the Fun Run is free, but participants need to register for the event.

There will be race-day registration open from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. at the new YMCA of Barry County building at 2350 Iroquois Trail.

Check-in an packet pick-up will be held Nov. 26 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the new YMCA of Barry County building and from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. on race day.

Both races begin at the corner of Buehler Road and Iroquois Trail. The Fun Run takes off at 8:30 a.m. and the 5K takes off at 8:45 a.m. Both races end on the front lawn of the YMCA Camp Algonquin.

Race day parking is available at the Algonquin Lake Community Association and at the New Y Building at 2350 Iroquois Trail. Parking attendants will be stationed to offer instructions. There will be no public parking at the YMCA Camp Algonquin.

In addition to the champs' turkeys, there will be a prize and a photo-op for the best dressed runner wearing the most festive fall gear.

The race will also once again include a school challenge. The school with the highest percentage of students participation in relation to its enrollment within the school system will be presented with the Turkey Trophy, which can be displayed at the school the following year. The trophy will be awarded and announced the week following Thanksgiving.

Racers are also encouraged to donate non-perishable food items on race day, with drop-off tables present at both parking locations. The YMCA will donate items to the Barry County United Way.

There are also plans once again for hot cocoa, water and giveaways at Camp Algonquin at the end of the event.

A total of 476 5K runners completed the race in 2024. Riley Shults took the men's championship in 16 minutes 2.02 seconds and Katherine Weinbrecht was the women's champion in 19:32.7.

— *BB*

Village of Middleville
COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the October 28, 2025 Regular Council Meeting, that were approved on November 12, 2025, are posted at the Village Hall at 100 E Main Street and on the website at www.villageofmiddleville.org.



GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Gaines Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing to consider the following request:

Summary of Request: Request for a 52.8-foot dimensional variance to decrease the street side setback for a residential dwelling from 60 feet to 7.2 feet in the Agricultural/Rural Residential zoning district.

Property Address: 7761 Hanna Lake Avenue, Caledonia, MI 49316

Parcel Number: 41-22-15-200-029

Applicant: Brian DeSmit, Bat Flip LLC

Date and Time of Hearing: December 10th, 2025, at 7:00 PM

Location of Hearing: Gaines Charter Township Offices, Board Room 8555 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Caledonia, MI 49316

Any interested party may appear and be heard on said proposal. Information related to this request may be inspected during regular business hours Monday through Friday, at the Planning Department window located in the Gaines Charter Township Offices or contact Dan Wells at (616) 980-6188 or dan.wells@gainestownship.org. To be entered into the public record, signed written comments must be received by 5 PM on December 10th , 2025.

Persons with disabilities needing special accommodations should contact info@gainestownship.org or (616) 698-6640 one week prior to the meeting to request mobility, visual or any other assistance.

GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Gaines Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing to consider the following request:

Summary of Request: Request for a 41.97 square-foot dimensional variance to increase the size of an interior site sign from 8 square feet to 49.97 square feet in the Office Service zoning district.

Property Address: 440 72nd Street, Grand Rapids, MI 49548

Parcel Number: 41-22-07-376-005

Applicant: Kim Allard; Allied Signs Inc.

Date and Time of Hearing: December 10th, 2025, at 7:00 PM

Location of Hearing: Gaines Charter Township Offices, Board Room 8555 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Caledonia, MI 49316

Any interested party may appear and be heard on said proposal. Information related to this request may be inspected during regular business hours Monday through Friday, at the Planning Department window located in the Gaines Charter Township Offices or contact Dan Wells at (616) 980-6188 or dan.wells@gainestownship.org. To be entered into the public record, signed written comments must be received by 5 PM on December 10th , 2025.

Persons with disabilities needing special accommodations should contact info@gainestownship.org or (616) 698-6640 one week prior to the meeting to request mobility, visual or any other assistance.



Caledonia seniors Sophie Gaylord and Aliya Van Hofwegen, pictured at the front of the line headed for the 100-yard butterfly final at the OK Conference East Division Championships, are a part of a group of eight Fighting Scots who were set to compete in the Nov. 21-22 MHSAA L.P. Division 1 State Finals at Oakland University. **Photo by Brett Bremer**

Scots sent some of state's fastest swimmers to D1 Finals

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The OK Conference East Division champion Caledonia varsity girls' swimming and diving team was set for four individual and three relay competitions at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals Nov. 20-21 at Oakland University in Rochester.

Caledonia teams qualified for the state finals in all three relay races, the 200-yard medley relay, the 200-yard freestyle relay and the 400-yard freestyle relay.

Fighting Scot senior Sophie Gaylord was set to compete in the 50-yard freestyle and the 100-yard freestyle at the state finals, and junior Mya VanderZwaag was also set to compete in the 50-yard freestyle as well as the 100-yard breaststroke.

The rest of the Fighting Scot relay squads included freshmen Caitlyn Morris and Kailey Hall, sophomores Chloe Kerkstra, Lily Klein Amelia McCann, and senior Aliya Van Hofwegen.

The top 16 in each event at the state finals earn medals. Gaylord and VanderZwaag were both state medalists in the 50-yard freestyle at the 2024 state finals. Gaylord is a two-time state medalist in that event already and has earned seven state medals overall through her first three varsity swimming and diving seasons.

Gaylord entered the meet seeded third in the 100-yard freestyle and fourth in the 50 free.

VanderZwaag headed to Oakland as a five-time state medalist already, Van Hofwegen has earned three and McCann one state medal prior to this season.

The Fighting Scot 200-yard medley relay and 200-yard freestyle relay teams were both ranked among the top eight heading into the finals too.

Yankee Springs Twp. Board honors longtime volunteer, approves budget amendments



The Yankee Springs Township Board observed a moment of silence on Thursday, Nov. 13, before presenting a plaque to the family of Rich Beukema, who served the township for more than 27 years on various boards. Pictured here are (from left) Tim Hopkins, Larry Knowles, Rob Heethuis, Maxine Beukema, Darl Beukema, Dave Van Houten and Deb Mousseau. **Courtesy photo**

The Yankee Springs Township Board approved several budget amendments, appointed two new planning commission members and honored a longtime volunteer at its regular meeting on Thursday, Nov. 13.

The board observed a moment of silence on Thursday before presenting a plaque to the family of volunteer Rich Beukema, who served the township for more than 27 years on various boards. His wife, Maxine, thanked members for the recognition.

Following the plaque presentation, Treasurer Deb Mousseau reported a projected revenue decrease due to reductions in state sales tax sharing. Because the township park project was delayed into the new fiscal year, the board approved amendments adjusting both revenues and expenditures to $1,876,411, using $98,511 from fund balance.

During public comment, one resident requested a budget amendment to remove the $150,000 allocation for the township water system.

Clerk Tom Hopkins reported a smooth November election during last week's meeting, with 612 of 3,118 registered voters participating. The township's annual audit was also completed successfully.

The planning commission continued working on updates to the mining ordinance on Thursday and will hold a public hearing next month.

The fire department reported 21 fire calls and 49 medical responses in October. Chief Dan Miller introduced newly-licensed EMT Nikki Mendez on Thursday. Mendez will be enrolling in the fire academy in January to work toward being a certified firefighter, as well.

Township park facilities have been closed for the season and recycling use continues to increase, say township staff.

The board unanimously appointed John Trygier and Nicole Smith to the planning commission on Thursday. It also voted to appeal a recent court decision involving a zoning violation on Park Drive, citing potential long-term impacts on enforcement. Following up on past requests from township residents, the board voted to reinstate having two public comment sections at each meeting.

Members also approved the sale of the township's retired fire truck for $20,000.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Dec. 11 at the Township Hall. — *Yankee Springs Township*

CHS singers participate in MSVMA Festival



Ten Caledonia High School choir students participated in the Michigan School Vocal Music Association (MSVMA) Musical Theater Solo and Ensemble Festival on Saturday, Nov. 15. The singers performed in eleven different events, receiving nine first division ratings and two second division ratings. Pictured here are (front row, from left) Sophia Price, Nola Pearson, Jordyn Duffy, Emma Kellogg, (back row) Maggie Koopman, Savannah Robinson, Justin Brown, Zahara Muriithi and Cara Price. Not pictured is Kylee Zimmerer. **Courtesy photo**

GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Gaines Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing to consider the following request:

Summary of Request: Request for a 40-foot dimensional variance to decrease the street side setback for an accessory building from 60 feet to 20 feet in the Agricultural/Rural Residential zoning district.

Property Address: 9720 Hanna Lake Avenue, Caledonia, MI 49316

Parcel Number: 41-22-26-320-002

Applicant: Jeremy Boot

Date and Time of Hearing: December 10th, 2025, at 7:00 PM

Location of Hearing: Gaines Charter Township Offices, Board Room 8555 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Caledonia, MI 49316

Any interested party may appear and be heard on said proposal. Information related to this request may be inspected during regular business hours Monday through Friday, at the Planning Department window located in the Gaines Charter Township Offices or contact Dan Wells at (616) 980-6188 or dan.wells@gainestownship.org. To be entered into the public record, signed written comments must be received by 5 PM on December 10th, 2025.

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THORNAPPLE TOWNSHIP BOARD 200 E MAIN ST. MIDDLEVILLE, MI 49333
SYNOPSIS OF MEETING MINUTES
Monday, November 10, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with seven members present.

Items approved:
1. Printed Agenda approved as presented.
2. Consent Agenda approved as amended.
3. Approved minutes of the October 21, 2025 special meeting.
4. Approved use of the Township Hall by the DDA on 12/4/25 & 12/6/25.
5. Approved special assessment for the 2025 Winter Tax Roll.
6. Approved Bubbler Ordinance.
7. Approved creation of an EMT/FF administrative assistant.
8. Approved Matrix bid.
9. Approved purchase of a brush truck.
10. Approved purchase of command truck.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Prepared by Deputy Clerk Brenda Hess. Approved by Township Supervisor, Eric Schaefer.

Copies of the meeting minutes are available upon request from the Township Clerk or by visiting https://thornapple-twp.org/meeting-minutes/ Office hours 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

DNR reports Allegan County's first CWD-positive wild deer

Allegan is now the 17th Michigan county where chronic wasting disease has been identified in the wild deer population, according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. An emaciated doe reported by residents of Leighton Township recently tested positive for the disease.

CWD was confirmed by the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. The sample was also sent for a secondary confirmation to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, but results may be delayed due to the federal government shutdown.

CWD is a fatal neurological disease that affects white-tailed deer, elk and moose. To date, the disease has not officially been detected in Barry County, but Eaton to the west, and Kent and Ionia counties to the north have all been affected and now Allegan to the east. CWD has also bee detected in deer from Clinton, Dickinson, Genesee, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Ingham, Isabella, Jackson, Mecosta, Midland, Montcalm, Ogemaw and Washtenaw counties in Michigan.

The declining health of this 1.5-year-old doe in Allegan was first noted by private landowners in late summer. In late September, the DNR was contacted and authorized humane euthanasia and collection of the deer. On exam at the DNR's Wildlife Disease Lab, the deer was noted to be in poor physical condition with no body fat.

"The care that's demonstrated when people take the time to share their observations is a critical contribution to our disease-testing efforts," said Brent Rudolph, DNR deer, elk and moose management specialist. "Public reporting of deer that appear unhealthy is very important for identifying CWD that may exist at low levels in previously undetected areas."

CWD is a chronic, slow-developing disease that spreads slowly across the landscape. It has been detected in Kent County, adjacent to Leighton Township, which is in the northeast corner of Allegan County. Allegan County was under focused CWD surveillance in 2021, when approximately 500 deer were tested, with none testing positive. The DNR has continued to test deer that appear sick in Allegan County when possible. Hunters can get their deer tested with a free CWD self-sample submission kit from the DNR.

Deer that appear emaciated, lethargic, disoriented, lame or unresponsive are good candidates for CWD testing, though these symptoms are characteristic of deer affected by other maladies or injuries as well. The public is encouraged to report sick deer online at Michigan.gov/EyesInTheField.

To date, there have been no reported cases of CWD infection in people. However, as a precaution, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that infected animals not be consumed as food by either humans or domestic animals.

Since chronic wasting disease was first detected in Michigan's wild deer in 2015, more than 110,000 deer in Michigan have been tested for CWD through a variety of efforts, including responding to public reports of sick deer and focused testing of hunter-harvested deer. In total, more than 144,000 wild deer have been tested through DNR surveillance efforts that started in 2002, with 265 CWD-positive deer identified. In addition, since direct hunter submissions of deer to the MSU lab began in 2020, more than 3,400 submitted samples have yielded 61 additional confirmed positives.

After initial intensive testing near areas of the first CWD detections in the state, the DNR began a rotational approach to testing harvested deer in 2021. A group of counties is selected each year, with the eventual aim of testing enough deer in every Michigan county. The goal of this approach is early disease detection, as management has the potential to be most effective when the disease is caught early. This method also provides the DNR with confidence that if the disease does exist in these areas but goes undetected, that it is most likely there at a very low level.

The DNR suggests hunters should take precautions when field-dressing or processing deer: wear rubber gloves, minimize contact with the deer's brain and spinal tissue, and wash hands with soap and warm water after handling any parts of the carcass.

Proper disposal of deer carcasses is critical to prevent the spread of chronic wasting disease. Deer carcasses and parts should go directly to a landfill or be disposed of through regular bagged trash pickup. Studies show that CWD can survive on the landscape for years, contributing to the spread of disease. Deer harvested from known CWD areas should never be disposed of on the landscape.

Beginning in 2025, free self-sample submission kits are now available in all counties outside of the DNR bovine tuberculosis (TB) or CWD surveillance areas. Kits allow hunters to remove lymph nodes and ship them directly to the MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory at no cost. Hunters can pick up a kit at a local distribution site. If hunters choose not to pick up a kit, testing is available for a fee through direct submission to a cooperating USDA approved diagnostic laboratory.

— BB

Yankee Springs Township
284 N. BRIGGS ROAD- MIDDLEVILLE, MICHIGAN 49333
269-795-9091 / FAX 269-795-2388

YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF YANKEE SPRINGS, BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a special public hearing will be held on December 9, 2025, commencing at 6:00 p.m. at the Yankee Springs Township Hall, 284 N. Briggs Rd., Middleville MI, within the Township, as required under the provisions of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act and the Zoning Ordinance for the Township.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE In addition to participation during a public hearing, members of the public may also provide comments for the ZBA's consideration by emailing or mailing those comments to the ZBA for receipt prior to the meeting, in care of the Township Zoning Administrator, Joe Shea (joeshea@yankeespringstwp.org). Letters and emails are due 3 days before the meeting date, or by leaving a phone message prior to the meeting with the Township Zoning Administrator, Joe Shea at 269-795-9091.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the item(s) to be considered at said public hearing include, in brief, the following:

1. **ZBA 25-11-05. Parcel ID: 16-030-040-00. 12774 Russell Drive, Wayland MI 49348**. The property is zoned Residential Single Family (RSF). The property owner, Andy Northey / Swan Equity is appealing the decision of the zoning administrator denying a short-term rental permit pursuant to Article XX of the Yankee Springs Township Zoning Ordinance.
2. **Such other business as may properly come before the Zoning Board of Appeals**.

Anyone interested in reviewing the application material may do so at the township hall. All interested persons are invited to be present at the aforesaid time and place, or, if an electronic meeting is held, to participate via the electronic meeting.

Yankee Springs Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, to individuals with disabilities at the hearing upon four (7) days' prior notice to the Township Clerk. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Township Clerk at the address or telephone number listed below.

YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Jake Welch, Chairman
Yankee Springs Township Hall
284 N. Briggs Rd.
Middleville, Michigan 49333
(269) 795-9091

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INCREASE:
A ROAD MAP TO FINANCIAL HEALTH

Giving sets the tone


Zach Santmier

Today, we are going to discuss the second financial health marker on your fuel gauge. If you're just joining us, here's a quick recap.

Money is fuel. Fuel to get you where you want, or even feel called to go. Therefore, we need a full tank so we can live confidently and move toward the life we desire.

The first mark on your fuel gauge is simple. Spend less than you make. This second step is challenging, and for many, counterintuitive.

Give 10% of your income away.

What? If the objective of what we are talking about is to increase our finances, then why would we start by giving money away?

Here's what I believe and have practiced my entire adult life. When giving becomes the starting point—the first line item—it shifts the entire budget into a healthier, more intentional posture. Suddenly, the remaining 90% has structure. It has purpose.

I also believe that giving the first 10% isn't generosity in the traditional sense—it's discipline. It's a habit that pulls the heart away from impulse and toward intentionality. And that discipline pays dividends. When you make the decision to give right away, before the month begins, you naturally become more thoughtful with the rest. You're more aware. You plan differently. You spend with more clarity and fewer regrets.

This becomes especially impactful during the holiday season—a time when excess spending is almost expected. People often go into the holidays hoping to feel generous, only to end up feeling stressed, stretched, and financially behind by January 1. But those who enter the season with a disciplined rhythm of giving already baked into their mindset experience the season differently. They're not scrambling to squeeze generosity into what's left. They've already positioned giving at the top, and as a result, their spending naturally falls into more meaningful, intentional patterns.

Giving the first 10% also creates a margin—mentally and emotionally. Instead of chasing possessions or temporary comforts, you create a built-in reminder that the purpose of money is bigger than consumption. When the first part goes toward others, the rest becomes easier to manage because you've already made the hardest, most defining decision of the month.

And here's the beautiful thing: once the first 10% is allocated, the remaining 90% tends to work better. Budgeting becomes clearer. Overspending becomes less frequent. Priorities become sharper. Giving first removes the fog from the rest of your financial picture.

So as the holidays approach, giving isn't just a nice gesture—it's a powerful way to set the tone for your entire budget. It grounds your values, shapes your habits, and allows the remaining 90% to be spent, saved, and enjoyed with far more clarity and purpose.

Today, let's start small, but also stretch our giving muscles. I want you to take a crisp $100 bill out of the bank, and I want you to give it to someone in your life who could use a little extra help. I know we may not have our money right where we want it today, but if we start increasing by giving, we will very quickly see our hearts change as we focus outwards and on others. Happy Season of Giving!

Zach Santmier is the owner of Trumble Agency, Inc. and the author of the personal financial course, Increase. He focuses on helping families escape paycheck-to-paycheck living so they can freely pursue their ideal future.

Visit us online at www.HastingsBanner.com

TOWNSHIP BOARD
TOWNSHIP OF THORNAPPLE
Barry County, Michigan

Board member Campbell, supported by Board member Stanton, moved the adoption of the following ordinance:

ORDINANCE NO. 01-2025

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE THORNAPPLE TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE (ORDINANCE 21.42, AS ADDED); TO AMEND ARTICLE XXI PERTAINING TO GENERAL PROVISIONS; AND TO AMEND SECTION 32.2 PERTAINING TO DEFINITIONS.

THORNAPPLE TOWNSHIP, BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN, ORDAINS:

Section 1. Amendment of Article XXI. Article XXI of the Thornapple Township Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended to add the following Section 21.42, which reads as follows:

Section 21.42 Bubblers and Ice Retardant Systems

(a) Purpose. The use of bubblers or other ice retardant systems interferes with the safe, convenient, and reasonable use and navigability of bodies of water in the winter. Absent regulations, bubblers and ice retardant systems may be dangerous to people who are present on the ice, including, but not limited to, snowmobilers and operators of ATVs, children playing, pedestrians, cross-country skiers, and individuals ice fishing.

(b) Prohibition. The use of bubblers or other ice retardant systems, as defined herein, shall be expressly prohibited on Duncan Lake and the Thornapple River, unless otherwise required for the maintenance of essential services, public infrastructure, or in the case of an emergency, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.

Section 2. Amendment of Section 32.2. Section 32.2 of the Thornapple Township Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended to add the following Section 32.2.17.1, which reads as follows:

Section 32.2.17.1 Bubbler or Ice Retardant System
Means any machinery, motor, engine, item, equipment, mechanism, pump, compressor or compression system or any structural, mechanical or other system whether automatically or manually operated and which is designed, intended or functions to interrupt, stop or slow down the natural freezing of waterways or to break up any ice surrounding or adjacent to any boat, vessel, pier, dock or seawall as a means of a wet storage system for such boat or vessel, or protection for any dock, structure, pier or seawall, during the winter months. This definition also includes any system or apparatus that uses aerators, forced air, props, a pump, agitation or other motion to weaken or prevent ice within a lake or body of water.

Section 3. Severability and Captions. This Ordinance and the various parts, sections, subsections, sentences, phrases and clauses thereof are hereby declared severable. If any part, section, subsection, sentence, phrase or clause is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Ordinance shall not be affected thereby. The captions included at the beginning of each Section are for convenience only and shall not be considered a part of this Ordinance.

Section 4. Repeal. Any existing ordinance or resolution that is inconsistent or conflicts with this Ordinance is hereby repealed to the extent of any such conflict or inconsistency.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Ordinance is ordered to take effect eight (8) days following publication of adoption in *The Sun and News*, a newspaper having general circulation in the Township, under the provisions of 2006 Public Act 110, except as may be extended under the provisions of such Act.

ROLL CALL VOTE:
YES: Schaefer Medenblik Bouchard Campbell DeMaagd Rairigh Stanton
NO: None

Declared adopted on: November 10, 2025



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One client thought she had the "Cadillac" of Medicare plans — until we compared options and found her a plan with better coverage at a lower cost. She even added a hospital indemnity policy and still saved money!

Don't Believe Everything You Hear on the Phone
Another client switched plans after a phone rep promised her "something better." When we reviewed it together, her original plan had stronger coverage and lower out-of-pocket costs. We helped her get back on the plan that truly fit her needs.

Helping a Veteran Get Extra Money Back
A veteran we worked with wasn't using his plan much since he gets care through the VA. We helped him find a plan that gives him over $100 back each month through the Part B giveback benefit — while still keeping his VA care.

Schedule your appointment today before open enrollment ends Dec 7!



Josh Lamphere
Medicare Specialist

269.213.3232
josh@trumbleagency.com
www.barrycountymedicare.com
128 S. Jefferson St. Hastings, MI 49058

Disclaimer: We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all of your options.